

**IN THE CLAIMS**

Please amend the claims as shown below, in which deletions are indicated by strikethrough and/or double brackets, and additions are indicated by underscoring. This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application.

1. (Currently Amended) An insert apparatus for use with a rain gutter, said apparatus comprising:

an elongated insert body adapted to fit into a hollow channel of a gutter, and to contact the floor of the gutter when placed therein, said insert body comprising a nonwoven mat comprising a plurality of filaments having open interstices defined therebetween, with a binder affixing selected areas of said filaments to one another, wherein the arrangement of said filaments within said nonwoven mat defines a substantially flattened top surface thereof;

wherein said apparatus is configured to substantially fill a portion of the gutter when placed therein, while leaving a substantially unobstructed water flow path between a wall of the insert body and the gutter.

2. (Original) The insert apparatus of claim 1, wherein the filaments comprise coconut shell fibers.
3. (Original) The insert apparatus of claim 1, wherein the filaments comprise a synthetic material.
4. (Currently Amended) The insert apparatus of claim 1, wherein the apparatus is

configured to contact a gutter on at least three different surfaces thereof, and wherein a portion of the nonwoven mat is adapted to contact the floor of the gutter in an installed configuration of the apparatus.

5. (Currently Amended) The insert apparatus of claim 1, wherein ~~the bottom surface of the~~ insert body has a void formed therein to provide said substantially unobstructed water flow path.

6. (Original) The insert apparatus of claim 1, further comprising a cover sheet attached to the top surface of the insert body, said cover sheet comprising a foraminous screen material.

7. (Original) The insert apparatus of claim 6, wherein the screen material is formed from plastic to present a smooth surface.

8. (Currently Amended) An insert apparatus for use with a rain gutter, said apparatus comprising:

an elongated insert body adapted to fit into a hollow channel of a gutter, and to contact the floor of the gutter when placed therein, said insert body comprising a nonwoven mat comprising a plurality of filaments having open interstices defined therebetween, with a binder affixing selected areas of said filaments to one another, wherein the arrangement of said filaments within said nonwoven mat defines a substantially flattened top surface thereof; and

a cover sheet attached to the top surface of the insert body, said cover sheet comprising a foraminous screen material.

9. (Original) The insert apparatus of claim 8, wherein the filaments comprise coconut shell fibers.
10. (Original) The insert apparatus of claim 8, wherein the filaments comprise a synthetic material.
11. (Currently Amended) The insert apparatus of claim 8, wherein the apparatus is configured to contact a gutter on at least three different surfaces thereof, and wherein a portion of the nonwoven mat is adapted to contact the floor of the gutter in an installed configuration of the apparatus.
12. (Currently Amended) The insert apparatus of claim 8, wherein the insert body is configured to leave an open flow path ~~therebelow~~ between a wall of the insert body and the gutter when installed in a gutter.
13. (Original) The insert apparatus of claim 8, wherein the screen material is formed from plastic to present a smooth surface.
14. (Currently Amended) A method of lining a gutter with a porous gutter insert, comprising the steps of:
- placing an elongated insert into a gutter channel in a manner so that when installed, the insert contacts the gutter on at least three sides of the insert, to cover the channel and to substantially fill part of the channel;

wherein the insert ~~is the insert of claim 1~~ comprises:

an elongated insert body adapted to fit into the hollow gutter channel, and to contact the floor of the gutter when placed therein, said insert body comprising a nonwoven mat comprising a plurality of filaments having open interstices defined therebetween, with a binder affixing selected areas of said filaments to one another, wherein the arrangement of said filaments within said nonwoven mat defines a substantially flattened top surface thereof;

and wherein the insert substantially fills a portion of the gutter when placed therein, while leaving a substantially unobstructed water flow path between a wall of the insert body and an inside wall of the gutter.

15. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 14, wherein at least a portion of an outer wall of the insert is oriented at an angle, so that a lower portion thereof is spaced away from a wall of the gutter to leave an unobstructed flow path therein.
16. (Original) The method of claim 14, further comprising a step of sliding the insert below protective sleeves surrounding mounting nails for the gutter.
17. (Original) The method of claim 14, further comprising a step of placing an outermost top edge of the insert below an upper inwardly facing lip of the gutter.
18. (New) An insert apparatus for use with a rain gutter, said apparatus comprising:  
an elongated insert body adapted to fit into a hollow channel of a gutter, to substantially fill a portion of the gutter channel, and to contact the floor of the gutter when placed therein, said

insert body comprising a nonwoven mat formed from a substantially non-absorbent material comprising a plurality of filaments having open interstices defined therebetween with a binder affixing selected areas of said filaments to one another.

19. (New) The insert apparatus of claim 18, wherein the filaments comprise coconut shell fibers.

20. (New) The insert apparatus of claim 18, wherein the apparatus is configured to contact a gutter on at least three different surfaces thereof, and wherein a portion of the nonwoven mat is adapted to contact the floor of the gutter in an installed configuration of the apparatus.

21. (New) The insert apparatus of claim 18, further comprising a cover sheet attached to the top surface of the insert body, said cover sheet comprising a foraminous screen material.

22. (New) The combination of a rain gutter and the insert apparatus of claim 18 installed in said rain gutter.